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ABSTRACT

A study was conducted to examine message evaluations of selected public service advertisements (PSAs) by a young adult population and to test whether local and nonlocal source attribution would influence those evaluations. In addition, the study investigated the extent to which audience characteristics such as fatalism (the degree to which a subject feels that his or her actions will affect a situation) and social responsibility can predict responses to such advertisements. Subjects, 108 college students in two separate classes, viewed seven individual slides containing printed PSAs. One group saw only PSAs having a local response source added to the original text; the second group saw the identical set, but in their original form, in which only two had local response sources. The subjects evaluated the PSAs using a semantic differential scale, then completed fatalism and social responsibility scales. They also supplied demographic information. Results indicated that local response sources did not produce significantly higher message evaluations than nonlocal sources. Social responsibility emerged as the most predictive variable in both treatment situations; fatalism, which emerged as a significant negative predictor of message evaluation, was prominent only in the local source situation. (FL)

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ADVERTISING DIVISION

# EVALUATION OF PUBLIC SERVICE ADVERTISING MESSAGES WITH LOCAL AND NON-LOCAL SOURCE ATTRIBUTION: A CONTROLLED LABORATORY EXPERIMENT

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The objectives of this study were: 1) to examine the dimensions of message evaluation for public service advertisements from local and non-local sources; 2) to measure the impact on public service advertisement evaluations of selected audience characteristics, e.g., social responsibility, fatalism, location and size of hometown, prior responses to public service advertising, age, and sex; and 3) to study the public service advertising message evaluations and audience characteristics of a young-adult population.

Public service advertising (PSA) is a pervasive, yet highly specialized form of communication utilized to disseminate information on public issues to the masses.[1] It is a pervasive form of mass communication yet, until recently,[2] it has been a subject of interest to a limited number of researchers.

The most prolific source of PSA is the Advertising Council, a non-profit organization which coordinates the national advertising campaigns for major institutions such as the American Red Cross. Advertising Council campaigns are the product of a cooperative effort between the institution sponsoring the advertising, and corporate representatives, volunteer advertising agencies and advertising media which print or broadcast the PSA material of their choice. Typically, Advertising Council campaigns deal with issues that are national in scope. The Advertising Council will not accept issues that are limited to specific geographic areas or specific population groups. This does not mean that the issues are impersonal. Alcohol, drug, and child abuse are current Council campaigns and all are intensely personal -- and local -- issues. However, the Council traditionally attributes the sources of these messages to a national organization, usually in Washington, D.C. or New

York city. In some cases, the Council does not offer any specific source attribution or address. Yet, virtually all of the Advertising Council campaigns are for programs that have a local contact. It would seem that these PSA's might be more effective if a specific local source were used instead of distant and, perhaps, more impersonal non-local sources. PSA research has been conducted in the area of source effects as they relate to types of sources,[3] but no studies have been found on the issue of local vs. non-local source attribution.

## The Problem

This study examined the dimensions of PSA message evaluations of a young adult audience when the messages were attributed to local and non-local sources. The relationships between PSA message evaluation and selected audience characteristics were also studied.

## Local and Non-Local Sources: the Experimental Treatments

Seven current public service advertisements by the Advertising Council were selected for this study on the basis of their presumed salience for this audience. The topics are: child abuse, blood donation, forest fire prevention, the Negro College Fund, the National Guard and Reserve, the American economic system, and alcoholism. One set of the ads were attributed to the original source and a second set of the ads were attributed to a local (Milwaukee) source. The sources and locations for each set of ads are given below:

| Local Source | Non-Local Source |
|---|---|
| **CHILD ABUSE** | |
| Milwaukee City Department of Social Services, Access Child Abuse Prevention, 1220 West Vliet Street, Milwaukee, WI 53205. | Prevent Child Abuse, Box 2866, Chicago, Illinois 60690. |
| **RED CROSS** | |
| Greater Milwaukee Chapter Headquarters, Red Cross, 2600 West Wisconsin Avenue, Milwaukee, WI 53233. | American Red Cross. No specific address given. |
| **FOREST FIRE PREVENTION** | |
| U.S. Forest Service Regional Office, 633 West Wisconsin Avenue, Milwaukee, WI 53233. | No specific source attribution or address given. |
| **UNITED NEGRO COLLEGE FUND** | |
| United Negro College Fund, 152 West Wisconsin Avenue, Milwaukee, WI 53233. | United Negro College Fund, Box C, 500 E. 62nd Street, New York, NY 10021. |
| **NATIONAL GUARD AND RESERVE** | |
| Army National Guard, Milwaukee Area, 4108 North Richards Avenue, Milwaukee, WI 53202 | Employer Support, Arlington, Virginia 22209. |
| **AMERICAN ECONOMIC SYSTEM** | |
| Department of Commerce, Milwaukee Office Publications Director, 517 East Wisconsin Avenue, Milwaukee, WI 53233. | The Advertising Council, Inc. 825 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10022 |

ALCOHOLISM

Milwaukee Area Alcoholics Anonymous, 238 W. Wisconsin Avenue, Milwaukee, WI 53233.

NCA, 733 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10017.

PSA Message Evaluation: the Dependent Variable

The dependent variable in this study was PSA message evaluation. Of the three basic components of communications effect, i.e., cognitive, affective, or behavioral, the affective was considered most appropriate for this study. The evaluative components of the semantic differential were used for this measure.[4]

Social Responsibility: An Independent Variable

The socially responsible individual can be described as one having "an orientation toward helping others even when there is nothing to be gained from them."[5] Among behavioral attributes of socially responsible individuals are: contributions to educational and religious organizations, volunteering of time to community projects, membership in organizations or social clubs, and higher-than-average levels of political involvement.[6] When administered to high school and college students, social responsibility scales indicate that the highly responsible student is deeply concerned over broad ethical and moral problems, and has a high set of standards and demands for himself.[7]

Instrument of choice was Berkowitz and Lutterman's eight-item Social Responsibility Scale (SRS). Items adhere to a Likert-scale format, with five response options from strongly agree through strongly disagree. Six of the eight items were drawn from a similar scale of responsibility by Harris.[8]

It was reasoned that a highly socially responsible person would be more likely to evaluate favorably any advertisements which were designed to stimulate thought and/or action on social issues. The question to be answered, then, was: "Will those individuals who are internally predisposed to helping others give more favorable evaluations of PSA's than those individuals who are not?" It was further reasoned that this variable would be a better predictor of PSA messages with non-local source attribution.

Fatalism: An Independent Variable

Another independent variable, fatalism, was used in the study because it has been shown to be a significant (negative) predictor of PSA message evaluation. Fatalism is the degree to which individuals feel their actions will have little or no impact on the environment. Generally, Ss who score high on the fatalism measure evaluate PSA messages significantly lower than those who score low on fatalism.[9]

One would expect fatalism to be less potent as a predictor in local-source messages.

One objective of this study is to determine if fatalism is a more viable predictor of local source message evaluations than non-local evaluations. Fatalism was measured in this study by the total number of fatalistic choices made by the Ss on the 29-item Rotter I-E (Internal-External) scale.[10]

Other Independent Variables

Previous response to PSA, as a variable, was considered a potentially important predictor of PSA message evaluation. Two variables were studied:

Previous response to PSA's. Ss were asked if they had ever responded to a public service advertisement.

Type of previous response to PSA's. Ss were asked to indicate the type of their previous response, e.g., donated money or time, or requested information.

The nature of the experimental treatments (local vs. non-local source attribution) suggested that another potentially important variable would relate to home town characteristics. Again, two variables were used:

Location of home town. Ss were asked to indicate if they lived in the metropolitan Milwaukee area (local) or elswhere (non-local).

Size of home town. Ss were asked to indicate the size of their home town on a standard Census Bureau instrument.

Age and sex. Ss were merely asked to indicate their sex and age.

## Hypotheses

There were two levels of inquiry in this study:

1. An examination of the influence of local and non-local PSA message evaluation by a young adult audience.

$H_1$: Ss exposed to PSA's with local source attribution will evaluate the messages significantly higher than Ss exposed to the same PSA's but attributed to non-local sources.

2. An examination of the relationships between PSA message evaluation and the audience characteristics of social responsibility, fatalism, previous response to PSA, and the demographics of home town, sex, and age.

$H_2$: Social responsibility, fatalism, previous PSA response, and selected demographics account for more variance (RSQ) in PSA message

evaluation with non-local source attribution than with local source attribution.

$H_{2a}$: Social responsibility is positively related to PSA message evaluation.

$H_{2b}$: Fatalism is negatively related to PSA message evaluation.

$H_{2c}$: Social responsibility will account for more RSQ in non-local PSA messages than in local PSA messages.

$H_{2d}$: Fatalism will account for more RSQ in non-local PSA message evaluation than in local PSA message evaluation.

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Notational Design

Experiment

| | $t_1$ | $t_2$ | $t_3$ | $t_4$ | $t_5$ | $t_6$ |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| $P_I$ | $T_{1-7(fx)}$ | $M_1$ | $M_{2-8}$ | -- | -- | -- |
| $P_{II}$ | -- | -- | -- | $T_{8-14(fx)}$ | $M_1$ | $M_{2-8}$ |

Legend

$P_I$ = 41 university students, average 18 years old

$P_{II}$ = 67 university students, average 18 years old

$t_1$-$t_2$ = Nov. 17, 1982, 2-2:30 p.m.

$t_3$ = Nov. 17, 1983, 2:30 p.m.

$t_4$-$t_5$ = Nov. 17, 1983, 3-3:30 p.m.

$t_6$ = Nov. 17, 1983, 3:30 p.m.

$T_{1-7}$ = seven slides of printed PSA's with local response sources (topics were, in order, Child Abuse, Red Cross, Forest Fire Prevention, Negro College Fund, National Guard and Reserve, American Economic System, Alcoholism); forced exposure

$T_{8-14}$ = seven slides of printed PSA's with non-local response sources (same topical order); forced exposure

$M_1$ = 10-adjective semantic differential scale for individual message evaluation

$M_{2-8}$ = Fatalism scale, Social Responsibility scale, demographic questions (age, sex, hometown), questions on previous responses to PSA messages

Narrative Description of Design

Population. A laboratory experiment involved a total of 108 university students in two sections of the introductory mass media class. One class of 41 and another of 67 were used.

Treatment. Ss viewed seven individual slides containing printed PSA messages on the topics of Child Abuse, Red Cross, Forest Fire Prevention, Negro College Fund, National Guard and Reserve, American Economic System, and Alcoholism. The first group was exposed to PSA's with a local response source address and telephone number added to the original advertisement. The second group saw the identical set of PSA's, but in their original form--all but two of which had non-local response sources. The exceptions were a PSA for forest fire prevention which had no response source in its original form, and the Red Cross which offered no address or phone number. The Milwaukee U.S. Forestry Service and Red Cross addresses and telephone numbers were included for the local-source treatments.

Independent Variables. Independent variables include the Rotter I-E Fatalism Scale, the Social Responsibility Scale, demographic factors of age, sex, hometown (Milwaukee and non-Milwaukee), size of hometown, and items concerning previous responses to PSA messages (whether subjects had ever donated time or money, given blood, or made any other type of response to a PSA).

As the design indicates, Ss, during their respective time periods, were exposed to an individual PSA, then asked to evaluate it using the semantic differential scales, for each of the seven topics. Ss were asked to read all of the advertising copy in each message before making

an evaluation. After the messages were evaluated, Ss were asked to complete the Fatalism scale, Social Responsibility scale, demographic items, and PSA-response questions.

Statistical Analysis

Frequencies were computed for all variables. $H_1$ was tested using analysis of variance. $H_2$-$H_{2d}$ were tested using multiple regression analysis. The F-ratio was used to test the significance of RSQ. An alpha level of .05 was adopted.

## RESULTS

Audience Characteristics and PSA Message Evaluation:

Descriptive Data

Audience Characteristics. Population for the study comprised two groups of college students. Population parameters are described in detail in Table 1. The total number of Ss numbered 108, with 41 in the group exposed to PSA's with a local source and 67 in the group exposed to the non-local PSA's.

The groups did not differ significantly on any of the dependent variables. Average age of the population was 18.4 years, and just over half of the participants were female (51.9%).

Most of the students reported that they were from hometowns outside the Milwaukee area (78.7%), and 21.3% listed Milwaukee as their hometown.

Asked if they had ever responded to a PSA, 55.6% said they had not, 34.3% reported that they had, and 10.1% said they didn't know if they had or not. Twelve subjects (11.1%) said they had responded by donating money, another 12 (11.1%) said they had made an information request, and 10 (9.3%) said they had donated their time in response to a

PSA. Three students (2.8%) said they had responded in other ways, such as giving blood or appearing on a charity telethon.

The two treatment groups had highly similar scores on the Fatalism and Social Responsibility scales, with a population average of 11.74 on the Fatalism Scale and an average score of 32.92 for Social Responsibility.

TABLE 1

Audience Characteristics

| | Group 1 (exposed to local source) n=41 | Group 2 (exposed to non-local source) n=67 | Total n=108 |
|---|---|---|---|
| SEX | | | |
| Male | 21 (51.2%) | 31 (46.3%) | 52 (48.1%) |
| Female | 20 (48.8%) | 36 (53.7%) | 56 (51.9%) |
| AGE | 18 (mean) | 18.7 | 18.41 |
| HOMETOWN | | | |
| Milwaukee | 5 (12.2%) | 18 (26.9%) | 23 (21.3%) |
| Non-Milwaukee | 36 (87.8%) | 49 (73.1%) | 85 (78.7%) |
| PSA RESPONSE | | | |
| No | 26 (63.4%) | 34 (50.7%) | 60 (55.6%) |
| Yes | 13 (31.7%) | 24 (35.8%) | 37 (34.3%) |
| DK | 2 (4.9%) | 9 (13.5%) | 11 (10.1%) |
| PSA TYPE | | | |
| Money | 5 (12.2%) | 7 (10.4%) | 12 (11.1%) |
| Info. Request | 5 (12.2%) | 7 (10.4%) | 12 (11.1%) |
| Time | 3 (7.3%) | 7 (10.4%) | 10 (9.3%) |
| Other | | 3 (4.5%) | 3 (2.8%) |
| FATALISM | 11.76 (mean) | 11.73 | 11.74 |
| SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY | 33.41 (mean) | 32.61 | 32.92 |

Message Evaluation. Mean message evaluation scores for each of the ten adjective pairs, followed by an overall mean for each message, are included in Table 2. Means for individual treatment groups, as well as composite evaluations (n=108) are given. Scores were derived from seven-point semantic differential scales, with 7 as the most positive response, 1 the most negative response, and 4 a neutral response.

The message receiving the highest overall evaluation by all Ss was the Alcoholism PSA (5.7). The same ad received the highest score by either treatment group, with a 5.9 mean evaluation by the local-source treatment group. The PSA for the American Economic System received the lowest overall rating by all Ss (4.4), as well as the lowest score by a treatment group--4.4 by the non-local source treatment group. Other messages, from most positively evaluated to most negatively evaluated were: Red Cross (5.6), Negro College Fund (5.1), Child Abuse (4.8), Forest Fire (4.7), National Guard and Reserve (4.6).

Certain ads received consistently high evaluations across several adjectival pairs. The Alcoholism PSA received the highest evaluations on the following scales: Good, Optimistic, Complete, Timely, Pleasing, and Sincere. The Red Cross PSA rated highest on the Positive, Pleasing, Happy, and Smooth adjectives. The Child Abuse ad rated highest on the Obvious scale.

Other ads were evaluated with consistently low scores across adjective pairs. The Forest Fire ad rated lowest on the following scales: Optimistic, Positive, Timely. The American Economic System ad was rated the least Good, Complete, Smooth, and Obvious. The National Guard ad was rated lowest on the Pleasing and Sincere scales, and the Child Abuse PSA was considered the least Happy of all the ads.

TABLE 2

MEAN PSA MESSAGE EVALUATION SCORES:
LOCAL SOURCE, NON-LOCAL SOURCE, AND TOTAL EVALUATION

| PSA MESSAGE | | GOOD | OPTIMISTIC | POSITIVE | COMPLETE | TIMELY | PLEASING | HAPPY | SMOOTH | OBVIOUS | SINCERE | OVERALL MEAN |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| CHILD ABUSE | (Local) | 5.8 | 4.5 | 4.5 | 5.7 | 5.8 | 4.2 | 2.8 | 4.6 | 6.1 | 6.1 | 5.0 |
| | (Non-Local) | 5.3 | 4.2 | 4.4 | 5.3 | 5.4 | 4.0 | 2.7 | 3.8 | 5.8 | 5.7 | 4.7 |
| | (Total) | 5.5 | 4.4 | 4.5 | 5.5 | 5.5 | 4.1 | 2.7[2] | 4.1 | 5.9[1] | 5.9 | 4.8 |
| RED CROSS | (Local) | 6.0 | 5.5 | 6.0 | 5.7 | 5.2 | 4.9 | 5.4 | 5.1 | 5.6 | 6.3 | 5.6 |
| | (Non-Local) | 5.9 | 5.7 | 6.0 | 5.6 | 5.5 | 5.4 | 5.6 | 5.4 | 5.5 | 6.1 | 5.7 |
| | (Total) | 6.0 | 5.6 | 6.0[1] | 5.6 | 5.4 | 5.2[1] | 5.5[1] | 5.3[1] | 5.6 | 6.2 | 5.6 |
| FOREST FIRE | (Local) | 5.3 | 3.7 | 4.1 | 4.3 | 4.9 | 4.1 | 3.3 | 3.9 | 5.2 | 5.9 | 4.5 |
| | (Non-Local) | 5.4 | 4.5 | 4.7 | 4.5 | 4.8 | 4.7 | 4.0 | 4.5 | 5.1 | 5.9 | 4.8 |
| | (Total) | 5.4 | 4.2[2] | 4.5[2] | 4.4 | 4.9[2] | 4.5 | 3.6 | 4.3 | 5.2[2] | 6.9 | 4.7 |
| NEGRO COLLEGE FUND | (Local) | 5.9 | 4.5 | 5.3 | 5.8 | 5.9 | 4.2 | 3.5 | 5.2 | 6.1 | 6.1 | 5.1 |
| | (Non-Local) | 5.2 | 4.8 | 5.2 | 5.5 | 5.6 | 4.3 | 3.8 | 4.8 | 5.7 | 6.0 | 5.1 |
| | (Total) | 5.5 | 4.7 | 5.3[2] | 5.6 | 5.7 | 4.3 | 3.7 | 4.9 | 6.5 | 6.1 | 5.1 |
| NATIONAL GUARD | (Local) | 4.5 | 4.9 | 5.1 | 4.6 | 4.9 | 3.4 | 4.1 | 4.8 | 4.9 | 4.6 | 4.6 |
| | (Non-Local) | 4.2 | 5.0 | 5.1 | 4.7 | 5.0 | 3.4 | 4.1 | 4.4 | 5.2 | 4.4 | 4.6 |
| | (Total) | 4.4 | 5.0 | 5.1 | 4.7 | 5.0 | 3.4[2] | 4.1 | 4.5 | 5.1 | 4.5[2] | 4.6 |
| AMERICAN ECONOMIC SYSTEM | (Local) | 4.5 | 4.8 | 4.9 | 4.2 | 5.6 | 3.8 | 4.1 | 4.0 | 5.0 | 4.5 | 4.5 |
| | (Non-Local) | 4.0 | 4.5 | 4.8 | 4.2 | 5.4 | 3.6 | 4.1 | 3.8 | 4.8 | 4.6 | 4.4 |
| | (Total) | 4.2[2] | 4.6 | 4.8 | 4.2[2] | 5.5 | 3.7 | 4.1 | 3.9[2] | 4.9[2] | 4.6 | 4.4** |
| ALCOHOLISM | (Local) | 6.3 | 6.0 | 6.3 | 5.7 | 5.9 | 5.2 | 5.5 | 5.2 | 6.0 | 6.5[1] | 5.9 |
| | (Non-Local) | 6.1 | 5.6 | 5.7 | 5.7 | 6.0 | 5.2 | 4.9 | 5.2 | 5.5 | 6.2 | 5.6 |
| | (Total) | 6.2[1] | 5.7[1] | 5.9 | 5.7[1] | 5.9[1] | 5.2[1] | 5.1 | 5.2 | 5.7 | 6.3 | 5.7* |

1 = highest score in column

2 = lowest score in column

* = highest overall score

** = lowest overall score

Effects of Local and Non-Local Source Attribution:

Analysis of Variance

Tables 3-11 present the F-ratios and significance levels for the 8 ANOVA's performed on the message evaluation data. The ANOVA was applied to the data in order to test $H_1$: Ss exposed to PSA's with local source will give significantly more favorable evaluations than Ss exposed to PSA's with non-local sources.

As Tables 5-11 indicate, the data did not support the hypothesis for the advertisements for the Red Cross, Forest Fire Prevention, Negro College Fund, National Guard and Reserve, American Economic System, and Alcoholism. The hypothesis was rejected in these cases, as well as for the total message evaluation for all seven ads.

The hypothesis was supported in the evaluation of the Child Abuse PSA. Table 3 indicates that the difference between message evaluations of groups exposed to local and non-local PSA's on Child Abuse was significant at the .02 level. Table 4 includes Child Abuse mean evaluation scores on individual adjective pairs according to treatment group. Ss exposed to the local-source PSA on Child Abuse evaluated their message significantly more favorably than did those Ss exposed to the non-local version of the same advertisement.

TABLE 3

EFFECTS OF LOCAL AND NON-LOCAL SOURCE ATTRIBUTION
ON MESSAGE EVALUATION OF "CHILD-ABUSE" PSA

| SOURCE OF VARIATION | SUM OF SQUARES | DF | MEAN SQUARE | F | SIGNIF OF F |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| MAIN EFFECTS | 301.58374 | 1 | 301.58374 | 6.013 | .01584* |
| GROUP | 301.58374 | 1 | 301.58374 | 6.013 | .01584* |
| EXPLAINED | 301.58594 | 1 | 301.58594 | 6.013 | .01584* |
| RESIDUAL | 5316.6641 | 106 | 50.157196 | | |
| TOTAL | 5618.2500 | 107 | 52.507004 | | |

* Significant at .02 level

TABLE 4

MEAN MESSAGE EVALUATION SCORES

FOR CHILD ABUSE PSA

| | GOOD | OPTIMISTIC | POSITIVE | COMPLETE | TIMELY | PLEASING | HAPPY | SMOOTH | OBVIOUS | SINCERE | OVERALL MEAN |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| LOCAL SOURCE | 5.8 | 4.5 | 4.5 | 5.7 | 5.8 | 4.2 | 2.8 | 4.6 | 6.1 | 6.1 | 5.0 |
| NON-LOCAL SOURCE | 5.3 | 4.2 | 4.4 | 5.3 | 5.4 | 4.0 | 2.7 | 3.8 | 5.8 | 5.7 | 4.7 |

TABLE 5

EFFECTS OF LOCAL AND NON-LOCAL SOURCE ATTRIBUTION
ON MESSAGE EVALUATION OF "RED CROSS" PSA

| SOURCE OF VARIATION | SUM OF SQUARES | DF | MEAN SQUARE | F | SIGNIF OF F |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| MAIN EFFECTS | 24.263794 | 1 | 24.263794 | .383 | .53718 |
| GROUP | 24.263794 | 1 | 24.263794 | .383 | .53718 |
| EXPLAINED | 24.265625 | 1 | 24.265625 | .383 | .53716 |
| RESIDUAL | 6710.2813 | 106 | 63.304535 | | |
| TOTAL | 6734.5469 | 107 | 62.939682 | | |

TABLE 6

EFFECTS OF LOCAL AND NON-LOCAL SOURCE ATTRIBUTION
ON MESSAGE EVALUATION OF "FOREST FIRE PREVENTION" PSA

| SOURCE OF VARIATION | SUM OF SQUARES | DF | MEAN SQUARE | F | SIGNIF OF F |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| MAIN EFFECTS | 298.27686 | 1 | 298.27686 | 2.854 | .09409 |
| GROUP | 298.27686 | 1 | 298.27686 | 2.854 | .09409 |
| EXPLAINED | 298.27734 | 1 | 298.27734 | 2.854 | .09409 |
| RESIDUAL | 11078.504 | 106 | 104.51418 | | |
| TOTAL | 11376.781 | 107 | 106.32506 | | |

TABLE 11

EFFECTS OF LOCAL AND NON-LOCAL SOURCE ATTRIBUTION ON TOTAL PSA EVALUATION (7 MESSAGES)

| SOURCE OF VARIATION | SUM OF SQUARES | DF | MEAN SQUARE | F | SIGNIF OF F |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| MAIN EFFECTS | 290.59033 | 1 | 290.59033 | .196 | .65905 |
| GROUP | 290.59033 | 1 | 290.59033 | .196 | .65905 |
| EXPLAINED | 290.62500 | 1 | 290.62500 | .196 | .65903 |
| RESIDUAL | 157334.38 | 106 | 1484.2864 | | |
| TOTAL | 157625.00 | 107 | 1473.1306 | | |

Relationships Between PSA Message Evaluation

and Audience Characteristics:

Multiple Regression

Local Source. Five of the independent variables (all but age) accounted for 31 percent of the RSQ in PSA message evaluation. However, social responsibility accounted for nearly half of the RSQ. Fatalism, as expected, was negatively related to message evaluation. Local residents, former PSA responders, and females were more apt to rate the local PSA's highly. The F-ratios of all five variables were significant. See Table 12.

Non-local source. The regression model accounted for only 17 percent of the RSQ. Social responsibility, hometown, and age accounted for significant amounts of RSQ. Again, social responsibility was the most prominent predictor (55 percent of the RSQ). Local residency and younger age also contributed significantly. See Table 13.

$H_2$ cannot be accepted. More RSQ was accounted for in the local-source evaluations. Social responsibility accounts for significant RSQ in PSA message evaluation with both local and non-local sources. The model, with the exception of age, accounted for significant RSQ in the local source evaluations. However, with non-local sources, only social responsibility, hometown, and age reach significance.

$H_{2a}$ is accepted. With both versions of the PSA's, social responsibility was positively related to message evaluation. Indeed, this variable was the best predictor in both cases.

$H_{2b}$ is rejected. Social responsibility accounts for significant RSQ in both local and non-local message evaluations. A greater proportion of RSQ is attributed to non-local treatments (55 percent) than to local treatments (45 percent).

TABLE 12

RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN AUDIENCE CHARACTERISTICS
AND TOTAL PSA MESSAGE EVALUATION, LOCAL SOURCE

| Independent Variables | a r | Variance (RSQ) Total | (Proportion) | df | Mean Square Regression | Residual | b F |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY | .375 | .14083 | (45.42) | 1/37 | 6064.52 | 999.92 | 6.06 |
| HOMETOWN | .238 | .04629 | (14.93) | 2/36 | 4028.92 | 972.33 | 4.14 |
| FATALISM | -.304 | .05933 | (19.13) | 3.35 | 3537.58 | 927.11 | 3.82 |
| PSA RESPONSE | .240 | .03512 | (11.33) | 4/34 | 3031.22 | 909.91 | 3.33 |
| SEX | -.026 | .02851 | (9.19) | 5/33 | 2670.53 | 900.28 | 2.97 |
| TOTAL | | .31008 | (100.00) | | | | |

a= correlation with dependent variable

b= underlined values significant at .05

TABLE 13

RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN AUDIENCE CHARACTERISTICS
AND TOTAL PSA MESSAGE EVALUATING NON-LOCAL SOURCE

| Independent Variables | a r | Variance (RSQ) Total | (Proportion) | df | Mean Square Regression | Residual |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY | .285 | .08129 | (55.37) | 1/61 | 8339.41 | 1545.17 |
| HOMETOWN | .186 | .03688 | (25.12) | 2/60 | 6061.80 | 1507.85 |
| AGE | -.162 | .01377 | (9.38) | 3/59 | 4512.18 | 1509.46 |
| PSA RESPONSE | -.041 | .01290 | (8.79) | 4/58 | 3715.05 | 1512.66 |
| SEX | -.204 | .00196 | (1.34) | 5/57 | 3012.17 | 1535.68 |
| TOTAL | | .14680 | (100.00) | | | |

a= correlation with dependent variable

b= underlined values significant at .05

TABLE 14

RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN AUDIENCE CHARACTERISTICS

AND "CHILD ABUSE" PSA MESSAGE EVALUATION (LOCAL SOURCE)

| Independent Variables | a r | Variance (RSQ) Total | (Proportion) | df | Mean Square Regression | Residual | b F |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| PSA RESPONSE | .312 | .09717 | (39.5) | 1/37 | 187.71 | 47.14 | 3.98 |
| HOMETOWN | .266 | .06238 | (25.6) | 2/36 | 154.10 | 45.09 | 3.42 |
| SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY | .254 | .04452 | (18.4) | 3/35 | 131.40 | 43.93 | 2.99 |
| AGE | -.260 | .02474 | (10.2) | 4/34 | 110.496 | 43.82 | 2.52 |
| FATALISM | -.267 | .01219 | (5.0) | 5/33 | 93.11 | 44.43 | 2.10 |
| SEX | .858 | .00288 | (1.3) | 6/32 | 78.52 | 45.64 | 1.72 |
| TOTAL | | .24388 | (100.0) | | | | |

a= correlation with dependent variable

b= underlined values significant at .05

$H_{2d}$ is rejected. Fatalism accounts for 6 percent of the RSQ (19 percent of the total) in message evaluation for the local source treatment. The F-ratio was not large enough for computation in the non-local treatment.

The "Child Abuse" PSA. With local source attribution, the model accounted for 24 percent of the RSQ. Only hometown (local residency) and social responsibility reach significance, although previous response to PSA's accounts for 40 percent of the total RSQ. See Table 14.

In the non-local model, all of the independent variables reached significance in accounting for 23 percent of the RSQ in message evaluation. Three variables, hometown, age, and social responsibility, were significant at .01. The greatest proportion of RSQ however was contributed by previous PSA response. Ss who had not previously responded to PSA's were most apt to evaluate this message highly. See Table 15.

The "Red Cross" PSA. Nearly 19 percent of the RSQ was accounted for in the local version of this ad. Nearly all of this RSQ (82 percent) was attributed to social responsibility. See Table 16.

The non-local version accounted for 13 percent of the RSQ and hometown (local residents) accounted for the greatest proportion of RSQ (59 percent). See Table 17.

The "Forest Fire Prevention" ad. The independent variables accounted for 44 percent of the RSQ in message evaluation for this ad when attributed to a local source but only 6 percent in the non-local version. See Tables 18 and 19. All variables reach significance at the .01 level in the local version although social responsibility is the most important. None of the variables reach significance in the non-local version.

TABLE 15

RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN AUDIENCE CHARACTERISTICS

AND "CHILD ABUSE" PSA MESSAGE EVALUATION (NON-LOCAL SOURCE)

| Independent Variables | a r | Variance (RSQ) Total | (Proportion) | df | Mean Square Regression | Residual | b F |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| PSA RESPONSE | -.296 | .08777 | (38.51) | 1/61 | 257.40 | 43.86 | 5.87 |
| HOMETOWN | .200 | .06748 | (29.60) | 2/60 | 227.64 | 41.29 | 5.51* |
| AGE | .236 | .03893 | (17.08) | 3/59 | 189.82 | 40.05 | 4.74* |
| SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY | .026 | .01679 | (7.37) | 4/58 | 154.68 | 39.89 | 3.88* |
| FATALISM | -.123 | .00813 | (3.57) | 5/57 | 128.51 | 40.18 | 3.19 |
| SEX | -.041 | .00886 | (3.87) | 6.56 | 111.42 | 40.43 | 2.76 |
| TOTAL | | .22796 | (100.00) | | | | |

a= correlation with dependent variable

b= underlined values significant at .05

*= underlined values significant at .01

TABLE 9

EFFECTS OF LOCAL AND NON-LOCAL SOURCE ATTRIBUTION
ON MESSAGE EVALUATION OF "AMERICAN ECONOMIC SYSTEM" PSA

| SOURCE OF VARIATION | SUM OF SQUARES | DF | MEAN SQUARE | F | SIGNIF OF F |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| MAIN EFFECTS | 48.877762 | 1 | 48.877762 | .655 | .42015 |
| GROUP | 48.877762 | 1 | 48.877762 | .655 | .42015 |
| EXPLAINED | 48.878906 | 1 | 48.878906 | .655 | .42014 |
| RESIDUAL | 7910.0898 | 106 | 74.623474 | | |
| TOTAL | 7958.9688 | 107 | 74.382874 | | |

TABLE 10

EFFECTS OF LOCAL AND NON-LOCAL SOURCE ATTRIBUTION
ON MESSAGE EVALUATION OF "ALCOHOLISM" PSA

| SOURCE OF VARIATION | SUM OF SQUARES | DF | MEAN SQUARE | F | SIGNIF OF F |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| MAIN EFFECTS | 161.73640 | 1 | 161.73640 | 1.869 | .17444 |
| GROUP | 161.73640 | 1 | 161.73640 | 1.869 | .17444 |
| EXPLAINED | 161.73828 | 1 | 161.73828 | | |
| RESIDUAL | 9171.1758 | 106 | 86.520523 | | |
| TOTAL | 9332.9141 | 107 | 87.223495 | | |

TABLE 16

RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN AUDIENCE CHARACTERISTICS

AND "RED CROSS" PSA MESSAGE EVALUATION (LOCAL SOURCE)

| Independent Variables | a r | Variance (RSQ) Total | (Proportion) | df | Mean Square Regression | Residual | b F |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY | .393 | .15472 | (81.7) | 1/37 | 292.86 | 43.24 | 6.77 |
| PSA RESPONSE | .148 | .01218 | (6.5) | 2/36 | 157.96 | 43.80 | 3.61 |
| FATALISM | -.225 | .00913 | (4.8) | 3/35 | 111.07 | 44.56 | 2.49 |
| HOMETOWN | .092 | .00754 | (3.9) | 4/34 | 86.87 | 45.45 | 1.91 |
| SEX | -.077 | .00556 | (2.9) | 5/33 | 71.66 | 46.51 | 1.54 |
| AGE | -.094 | .00029 | ( .2) | 6/32 | 59.76 | 47.94 | 1.24 |
| TOTAL | | .18943 | (100.0) | | | | |

a= correlation with dependent variable

b= underlined values significant at .05

TABLE 17

RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN AUDIENCE CHARACTERISTICS

AND "RED CROSS" PSA MESSAGE EVALUATION (NON-LOCAL SOURCE)

| Independent Variable | a r | Variance (RSQ) Total | (Proportion) | df | Mean Square Regression | Residual | b F |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| HOMETOWN | .280 | .07846 | (59.00) | 1/61 | 336.56 | 64.81 | 5.19 |
| FATALISM | -.113 | .02507 | (18.86) | 2/60 | 222.05 | 64.09 | 3.46 |
| SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY | .134 | .01157 | (8.70) | 3/59 | 164.58 | 64.34 | 2.56 |
| PSA RESPONSE | -.062 | .01393 | (10.48) | 4/58 | 138.37 | 64.42 | 2.14 |
| SEX | -.009 | .00375 | (2.82) | 5/57 | 113.91 | 65.27 | 1.75 |
| AGE | .042 | .00019 | ( .14) | 6/56 | 95.06 | 66.42 | 1.43 |
| TOTAL | | .13296 | (100.00) | | | | |

a= correlation with dependent variable

b= underlined values significant at .05

TABLE 18

RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN AUDIENCE CHARACTERISTICS

AND "FOREST FIRE PREVENTION" PSA MESSAGE EVALUATION (LOCAL SOURCE)

| Independent Variables | a r | Variance (RSQ) Total | (Proportion) | df | Mean Square Regression | Residual | b F |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY | .483 | .23310 | (53.5) | 1/37 | 787.64 | 70.04 | 11.25* |
| HOMETOWN | .262 | .05407 | (12.4) | 2/36 | 485.18 | 66.91 | 7.25* |
| SEX | .062 | .07598 | (17.4) | 3/35 | 409.03 | 61.48 | 6.65* |
| PSA RESPONSE | .191 | .04669 | (10.7) | 4/34 | 346.22 | 58.65 | 5.90* |
| FATALISM | -.044 | .01719 | (4.0) | 5/33 | 288.59 | 58.67 | 4.92* |
| AGE | .014 | .00867 | (4.0) | 6/32 | 245.37 | 59.59 | 4.12* |
| TOTAL | | .43571 | (100.0) | | | | |

a= correlation with dependent variable

b= underlined values significant 2

*= underlined values significant at .01

TABLE 7

EFFECTS OF LOCAL AND NON-LOCAL SOURCE ATTRIBUTION
ON MESSAGE EVALUATION OF "NEGRO COLLEGE FUND" PSA

| SOURCE OF VARIATION | SUM OF SQUARES | DF | MEAN SQUARE | F | SIGNIF OF F |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| MAIN EFFECTS | 6.7107553 | 1 | 6.7107553 | .105 | .74677 |
| GROUP | 6.7107553 | 1 | 6.7107553 | .105 | .74677 |
| EXPLAINED | 6.7109375 | 1 | 6.7109373 | .105 | .74676 |
| RESIDUAL | 6786.7227 | 106 | 64.025681 | | |
| TOTAL | 6793.4336 | 107 | 63.490021 | | |

TABLE 8

EFFECTS OF LOCAL AND NON-LOCAL SOURCE ATTRIBUTION
ON MESSAGE EVALUATION OF "NATIONAL GUARD AND RESERVE" PSA

| SOURCE OF VARIATION | SUM OF SQUARES | DF | MEAN SQUARE | F | SIGNIF OF F |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| MAIN EFFECTS | .17830890 | 1 | .17830890 | .002 | .96268 |
| GROUP | .17830890 | 1 | .17830890 | .002 | .96268 |
| EXPLAINED | .17968750 | 1 | .17968750 | .002 | .96253 |
| RESIDUAL | 8591.5664 | 106 | 81.052505 | | |
| TOTAL | 8591.7461 | 107 | 80.296692 | | |

TABLE 19

RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN AUDIENCE CHARACTERISTICS

AND "FOREST FIRE PREVENTION" PSA MESSAGE EVALUATION (NON-LOCAL SOURCE)

| Independent Variables | a r | Variance (RSQ) Total | (Proportion) | df | Mean Square Regression | Residual | b F |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| HOMETOWN | .133 | .01769 | (28.78) | 1/61 | 133.55 | 121.54 | 1.10 |
| AGE | -.130 | .02280 | (37.09) | 2/60 | 152.80 | 120.70 | 1.27 |
| FATALISM | -.091 | .01301 | (21.16) | 3/59 | 134.58 | 121.08 | 1.11 |
| PSA RESPONSE | -.047 | .00442 | (7.19) | 4/58 | 109.29 | 122.59 | .89 |
| SEX | -.120 | .00355 | (5.78) | 5/57 | 92.79 | 124.27 | .75 |
| TOTAL | | .06147 | (100.0) | | | | |

a= correlation with dependent variable

The "Negro College Fund" ad. About 15 percent of the RSQ is accounted for in the models for local and non-local source. However, none of the variables in either model reaches significance. See Tables 20 and 21.

The "National Guard and Reserve" ad. Again, neither the local nor non-local models account for significant RSQ. Fatalism accounts for the greatest proportion of RSQ in the local version; social responsibility is highest for the non-local ad. See Tables 22 and 23.

The "American Economic System" ad. None of the variables in the local source model reach significance (see Table 24). However, 20 percent of the RSQ in the non-local source model is accounted for and three variables reach significance at .01. Social responsibility is again the most significant predictor, followed by fatalism (with an unusual positive correlation), and age (with a negative correlation). See Table 25.

The "Alcoholism" ad. Although 17 percent of the RSQ in message evaluation for the local version is accounted for, none of the predictors reach significance. See Table 26. However, 23 percent of the RSQ is accounted for in the non-local version. Most of this (75 percent) is attributable to age. Younger Ss were most apt to rate this ad positively. All variables, except previous PSA response, were significant at the .01 level. See Table 27.

TABLE 20

RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN AUDIENCE CHARACTERISTICS

AND "NEGRO COLLEGE FUND" PSA MESSAGE EVALUATION (LOCAL SOURCE)

| Independent Variables | a r | Variance (RSQ) Total | (Proportion) | df | Mean Square Regression | Residual | b F |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| FATALISM | -.196 | .03840 | (24.9) | 1/37 | 84.60 | 57.26 | 1.48 |
| HOMETOWN | .154 | .03806 | (24.7) | 2/36 | 84.22 | 56.52 | 1.49 |
| SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY | -.052 | .02375 | (15.4) | 3/35 | 73.59 | 56.64 | 1.30 |
| SEX | -.134 | .02668 | (17.3) | 4/34 | 69.88 | 56.58 | 1.24 |
| PSA RESPONSE | .166 | .01360 | ( 8.9) | 5/33 | 61.90 | 57.39 | 1.07 |
| AGE | .009 | .01347 | ( 8.8) | 6/32 | 56.53 | 58.25 | .97 |
| TOTAL | | .15394 | (100.0) | | | | |

a= correlation with dependent variable

TABLE 21

RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN AUDIENCE CHARACTERISTICS AND "NEGRO COLLEGE FUND" PSA MESSAGE EVALUATION

| Independent Variables | a r | Variance (RSQ) Total | (Proportion) | df | Mean Square Regression | Residual | b F |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY | .221 | .04892 | (32.48) | 1/61 | 190.21 | 60.62 | 3.14 |
| HOMETOWN | .182 | .03466 | (23.01) | 2/60 | 162.49 | 59.39 | 2.74 |
| FATALISM | .126 | .02322 | (15.42) | 3/59 | 138.42 | 58.87 | 2.35 |
| PSA RESPONSE | -.055 | .01996 | (13.25) | 4/58 | 123.22 | 58.54 | 2.10 |
| SEX | -.006 | .01570 | (10.43) | 5/57 | 110.79 | 58.50 | 1.89 |
| AGE | .073 | .00814 | (5.41) | 6/56 | 97.60 | 58.98 | 1.65 |
| TOTAL | | .15060 | (100.0) | | | | |

a= correlation with dependent variable

TABLE 22

RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN AUDIENCE CHARACTERISTICS

AND "NATIONAL GUARD AND RESERVE" PSA MESSAGE EVALUATION (LOCAL SOURCE)

| Independent Variables | a r | Variance (RSQ) Total | (Proportion) | df | Mean Square Regression | Residual | b F |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| FATALISM | -.262 | .06875 | (52.6) | 1/37 | 172.44 | 63.13 | 2.73 |
| SEX | .155 | .01880 | (14.4) | 2/36 | 109.80 | 63.57 | 1.73 |
| PSA RESPONSE | .109 | .02035 | (15.6) | 3/35 | 90.22 | 63.93 | 1.41 |
| SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY | .164 | .01851 | (14.1) | 4/34 | 79.28 | 64.45 | 1.23 |
| AGE | -.139 | .00338 | (2.5) | 5/33 | 65.12 | 66.14 | .98 |
| HOMETOWN | -.043 | .00100 | ( .8) | 6/32 | 54.68 | 68.13 | .80 |
| TOTAL | | .13080 | (100.0) | | | | |

a= correlation with dependent variable

TABLE 23

RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN AUDIENCE CHARACTERISTICS

AND "NATIONAL GUARD AND RESERVE" PSA MESSAGE EVALUATION (NON-LOCAL SOURCE)

| Independent Variables | a r | Variance (RSQ) Total | (Proportion) | df | Mean Square Regression | Residual | b F |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY | .195 | .03807 | (60.17) | 1/61 | 203.16 | 84.14 | 2.41 |
| PSA RESPONSE | .152 | .01682 | (26.58) | 2/60 | 146.45 | 84.05 | 1.74 |
| AGE | -.119 | .00520 | (8.22) | 3/59 | 106.88 | 85.00 | 1.26 |
| HOMETOWN | .062 | .00284 | (4.49) | 4/58 | 83.95 | 86.21 | .97 |
| SEX | -.120 | .00034 | ( .54) | 5/57 | 67.52 | 87.69 | .77 |
| TOTAL | | .06327 | (100.00) | | | | |

a= correlation with dependent variable

TABLE 24

RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN AUDIENCE CHARACTERISTICS

AND "AMERICAN ECONOMIC SYSTEM" PSA MESSAGE EVALUATION (LOCAL SOURCE)

| Independent Variable | a r | Variance (RSQ) Total | (Proportion) | df | Mean Square Regression | Residual | b F |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| PSA RESPONSE | .290 | .08400 | (48.25) | 1.37 | 230.21 | 67.85 | 3.39 |
| HOMETOWN | .186 | .02909 | (16.71) | 2/36 | 154.97 | 67.52 | 2.30 |
| FATALISM | -.137 | .02549 | (14.64) | 3.35 | 126.61 | 67.45 | 1.88 |
| AGE | .008 | .01832 | (10.52) | 4/34 | 107.50 | 67.96 | 1.58 |
| SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY | -.012 | .01160 | (6.66) | 5/33 | 92.36 | 69.06) | 1.34 |
| SEX | -.010 | .00561 | (3.22) | 6/32 | 79.53 | 70.73 | 1.12 |
| TOTAL | | .17411 | (100.00) | | | | |

a= correlation with dependent variable

TABLE 25

RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN AUDIENCE CHARACTERISTICS

AND "AMERICAN ECONOMIC SYSTEM" PSA MESSAGE EVALUATION (NON-LOCAL SOURCE)

| Independent Variables | a r | Variance (RSQ) Total | (Proportion) | df | Mean Square Regression | Residual | b F |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY | .340 | .11539 | (57.95) | 1/61 | 555.38 | 69.79 | 7.96* |
| FATALISM | .132 | .04546 | (22.83) | 2/60 | 387.09 | 67.31 | 5.75* |
| AGE | -.263 | .02812 | (14.12) | 3/59 | 303.17 | 66.16 | 4.58* |
| PSA RESPONSE | -.004 | .00555 | (2.79) | 4/58 | 234.05 | 66.84 | 3.50 |
| SEX | -.265 | .00435 | (2.18) | 5/57 | 191.43 | 67.64 | 2.83 |
| HOMETOWN | .010 | .00026 | ( .13) | 6/56 | 159.73 | 68.83 | 2.32 |
| TOTAL | | .19913 | (100.0) | | | | |

a= correlation with dependent variable

b= underlined values significant at .05

*= underlined values significant at .01

TABLE 26

RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN AUDIENCE CHARACTERISTICS

AND "ALCOHOLISM" PSA MESSAGE EVALUATION (LOCAL SOURCE)

| Independent Variables | a r | Variance (RSQ) Total | (Proportion) | df | Mean Square Regression | Residual | b F |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| PSA RESPONSE | .290 | .08400 | (48.25) | 1/37 | 230.21 | 67.85 | 3.39 |
| HOMETOWN | .186 | .02909 | (16.71) | 2/36 | 154.97 | 67.52 | 2.30 |
| FATALISM | -.137 | .01549 | (14.64) | 3/35 | 126.60 | 67.45 | 1.88 |
| AGE | .008 | .01832 | (10.52) | 4/34 | 107.50 | 67.96 | 1.58 |
| SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY | -.012 | .01160 | (6.66) | 5/33 | 92.36 | 69.06 | 1.34 |
| SEX | -.010 | .00561 | (3.22) | 6/32 | 79.53 | 70.73 | 1.12 |
| TOTAL | | .17411 | (100.00) | | | | |

a= correlation with dependent variable

TABLE 27

RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN AUDIENCE CHARACTERISTICS

AND "ALCOHOLISM" PSA MESSAGE EVALUATION (NON-LOCAL SOURCE)

| Independent Variables | a r | Variance (RSQ) Total | (Proportion) | df | Mean Square Regression | Residual | b F |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| AGE | -.416 | .17338 | (74.82) | 1/61 | 1137.42 | 88.90 | 12.79* |
| SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY | .295 | .03617 | (15.61) | 2/60 | 687.36 | 86.43 | 7.95* |
| SEX | -.302 | .00881 | (3.80) | 3/59 | 477.52 | 86.91 | 5.49* |
| HOMETOWN | .029 | .00589 | (2.54) | 4/58 | 367.79 | 87.75 | 4.19* |
| FATALISM | -.115 | .00712 | (3.07) | 5/57 | 303.58 | 88.47 | 3.43* |
| PSA RESPONSE | .046 | .00036 | ( .16) | 6/56 | 253.38 | 90.00 | 2.82 |
| TOTAL | | .23174 | (100.0) | | | | |

a= correlation with dependent variable

b= underlined values significant at .05

*= underlined values significant at .01

## Summary and Implications

The purposes of this study were to examine message evaluation of selected public service advertisements by a young adult population and to test whether local and non-local source attribution would influence those evaluations. A secondary objective of the study was to determine to what extent audience characteristics such as fatalism and social responsibility predict responses to PSA's.

The issues selected for this study elicited a wide range of message evaluation from the young adult audience. The Alcoholism PSA was the most highly rated message in the series, and the American Economic System PSA was the lowest-rated item. A rank-order of PSA issues used in this study seems to suggest a hierarchy of response patterns which indicates the subjects' ability to discriminate among the various issues.

Overall in this particular study, the hypothesis that a local source attribution would produce significantly higher message evaluations could not be confirmed. However, one exception--the Child Abuse ad--did show a significant difference in message evaluation, which would indicate that in certain instances the inclusion of a local source could enhance evaluation by a young audience.

The regression analysis showed the independent variables as accounting for considerably more variance in the local-source than in the non-local-source situation. However, social responsibility emerged as the most predictive variable in both treatment situations. Fatalism, which emerged as a significant negative predictor of message evaluation, was prominent only in the local-source situation.

Several practical implications resulted from this study. First, for a young audience, selection of a proper appeal, such as appealing to social consciousness or other attributes of the socially responsible individual, could prove to be a fruitful creative strategy in the formulation of the PSA. Another practical implication stems from the comparative message evaluations by the young audience of the various campaign issues. Gatekeepers for the college media could base selection of PSAs on criteria which would include the relative importance of certain topics or issues to a particular campus.

In terms of the significance of fatalism in PSA message response, the implications are probably most important for the copywriter who must help the high-fatalist overcome the natural tendency to ignore messages that do not have an explicit reward. A final practical implication, based on the evidence in this study, is that in some instances the inclusion of a local source in a PSA might positively influence responses to messages.

This study, the first in a series with a young audience, offers direction for a number of potentially valuable research projects. It should be extended to other parts of the country with similar audiences. The study might also be improved if issues were selected on a more scientific basis, such as a pre-test of the relative salience of PSA campaign topics. It would also be possible to employ more and different methods of message evaluation in addition to the semantic scales chosen for this study. Finally, treatments might be enhanced in future studies of this type by placing the PSA's in a local or non-local media context.

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